

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 277643

E.O. 11652: N GDS

TAGS: CVIS, BTRA, UR

SUBJECT: VISAS COMVIS SOV (AEROFLOT)

REF: MOSCOW 18419

1. IN DISCUSSIONS LAST SPRING WITH SOVEMBASSY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMEN INDICATED THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO CONSIDER AMENDING CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT TO RAISE AEROFLOT STAFF LEVEL BY TWO. HOWEVER, DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT WERE SUSPENDED FOLLOWING DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT SOVIET VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT. FOLLOWING SUSPENSION DEPARTMENT RECEIVED SOVEMBASSY NOTE DATED AUGUST 9 REFERRING TO EARLIER DISCUSSIONS AS "VERBAL AGREEMENT", PROPOSING AN ADDITION OF TWO TO THE AEROFLOT REPRESENTATION IN THE US, AND STATING "A REPLY OF SIMILAR CONTENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WILL CONSTITUTE A FORMAL AGREEMENT ON THIS MATTER DEPARTMENT HAS NOT REPLIED TO THIS NOTE, AND HAS TAKEN POSITION THAT NO AGREEMENT WAS CONCLUDED.

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2. IN VIEW OF OCTOBER 31 REDUCTION OF AEROFLOT SCHEDULED

FLIGHTS TO TWO PER WEEK, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT EXISTING STAFF OF EIGHT (IN ADDITION TO SEVEN WORKING WIVES AND TWO 'DYS) IS ADEQUATE. PANAM MANAGES SAME NUMBER OF FLIGHTS WITH THREE PERMANENT AMERICAN EMPLOYEES.

3. PLEASE REPLY TO MFA QUERY RE ZAKHAROV VISA THAT NO AGREEMENT TO INCREASE AEROFLOT'S STAFF EXISTS. DEPARTMENT WILL CONSIDER AN INCREASE OF AEROFLOT'S STAFF TO TEN, BUT ONLY AFTER SOVIET AIRLINE'S COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING AGREEMENTS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDS THAT EMBASSY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE QUESTION OF AEROFLOT'S CONTINUING VIOLATIONS OF AGREEMENTS BY REFUSING TO TICKET SOVIET CITIZENS AND FOREIGN RESIDENTS FOR TRAVEL NOT ORIGINATING IN MOSCOW. FYI. ANOTHER FACTOR IN DEPARTMENT'S DECISION ON AEROFLOT STAFFING WILL BE RESPONSE TO SOVIET REQUEST FOR EXPANSION OF FREQUENCIES. THIS QUESTION STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION BY DEPARTMENT. END FYI. KISSINGER

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